

Message Text

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ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 SCS-03 SCA-01 SR-02 ORM-03

AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 NEA-10 DRC-01 /187 W

----- 091709

R 131524Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 700

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 3257

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ICRC, PFOR, MILI, PINS, SW

SUBJECT: 22ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS, TEHRAN,

NOV. 7-16, 1973

REF: A. STATE 164766; B. STATE 177463; C. GENEVA 4529;

D. S.M. SCHWEBEL MEMCON OF JULY 30, 1973

SUMMARY: MFA OFFICIALS VOLUNTEER TO EMBOFF CONFIRMATION THAT SWEDEN WILL DRIVE HARD AT INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE IN TEHRAN FOR ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS. THEY PROMISE COMPREHENSIVE FILL-IN ON SWEDISH INTENTIONS WHEN PLANS ARE MADE FINAL NEXT WEEK. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT DEPARTMENT PROVIDE EMBASSY RELEVANT BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND CONSIDER WHETHER INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE PROVIDED EMBASSY FOR PROJECTED NEXT MEETING WITH MFA OFFICIALS ON SUBJECT. END SUMMARY.

1. MFA OFFICIALS HANS BLIX AND AXEL EDELSTAM BROUGHT UP SUBJECT CONFERENCE TO EMBOFF IN POINTED FASHION DURING LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF A VISITING VIP. THEY EMPHASIZED GOS WANTED USG TO KNOW ITS INTENTIONS FULLY, AND REQUESTED EMBOFF TO CALL AT MFA NEXT WEEK FOR BRIEF-
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ING ON SWEDISH PLANS. MEANWHILE THEY MADE FOLLOWING

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

2. GOS WILL PRESS VERY HARD FOR SOME KIND OF PROVISION OR CONVENTION ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WHICH THEY HOPE WILL BE TABLED AT TEHRAN IN FORM OF RESOLUTION. SWEDES DO NOT NECESSARILY INSIST THAT CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS BE MADE PART OF ALREADY EXISTING DRAFT PROTOCOLS, OR OF A RESOLUTION INVOLVING DRAFT PROTOCOLS. THEY WOULD BE AMENABLE TO SEPARATE PROTOCOL WHICH COULD BE DISCUSSED SEPARATELY. SWEDES ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN A PROTOCOL BANNING NAPALM AND HIGH-VELOCITY BULLETS.

3. BLIX SAID HE KNOWS ICRC OFFICIALS ARE NOT KEEN ON BRINGING UP ANYTHING OF SUCH CONTROVERSIAL NATURE AT TEHRAN. HE SAID ICRC PEOPLE TOLD HIM RED CROSS HAS NO ANY DIFFICULT MATTERS IT HOPES TO GET SETTLED THAT THEY WOULD RISK LOSING WHOLE BAG IF SWEDEN AND OTHERS INSIST ON GOING TOO FAR. BLIX TOLD EMBOFF SWEDEN INTENDS TO PUSH AHEAD ANYWAY, BUT IS WILLING TO DISCUSS MATTER BEFORE CONFERENCE. BLIX EMPHASIZED ATTITUDE OF USG WOULD BE CRUCIAL. EMBOFF SAID HE HAD NO SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS RE USG ATTITUDE BEYOND HIS FEELING THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN HAVING CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTIONS PASSED BUT WE MIGHT WELL HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS SUCH AS HIGH-VELOCITY BULLETS. EMBOFF THANKED MFA OFFICIALS FOR THEIR FRANKNESS AND ASSURED THEM WE WOULD WELCOME BRIEFING ON THEIR SPECIFIC PROPOSALS.

4. AT LATER POINT IN LUNCHEON CONVERSATION EDELSTAM SAID SWEDEN WOULD BRING UP ITS CONVENTIONAL WARFARE PROPOSALS AT UNGA BUT WAS NOT PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH THAT FORUM OR CCD AS VEHICLE FOR ACHIEVING ANYTHING PRACTICAL. ANY FORA SUCH AS CCD WHICH DEPEND UPON CONSENSUS VOTES WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO AGREE ON A USEFUL PROTOCOL. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT ICRC WITH ITS TWO-THIRDS RULE COULD BE VEHICLE FOR ACHIEVING PROGRESS. HE SAID EVEN IF MAJOR STATES DID NOT GO ALONG AT FIRST, THEY MIGHT FEEL COMPELLED LATER, SUCH AS HAD HAPPENED IN CASE OF PROHIBITION OF DUM-DUM BULLETS. AS FINAL

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REMARK ON THIS SUBJECT THE MFA DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS WACHTMEISTER SAID A PRIMARY CONSIDERATION FOR SWEDEN IS TO AVOID ANY LINKING OF THIS HUMANITARIAN MATTER TO CONTENTIOUS CURRENT OR RECENT ISSUES. SPECIFICALLY, HE SAID, SUCH A DISCUSSION SHOULD NOT BE MADE TO APPEAR AS A JUDGEMENT UPON THE UNITED STATES FOR VIETNAM BEHAVIOR. ON CONTRARY HE SAID IT IS HOPED US EXPERIENCE IN VIETNAM, THE ATTENDANT WAR-WEARINESS THAT

HE HAD BEEN READING ABOUT, AND FACT US WAS NO LONGER IN COMBAT WOULD MAKE IT NOW MORE POSSIBLE FOR USG TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THESE FURTHER MEASURES TO ELIMINATE HUMAN SUFFERING.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: ONLY INFORMATION IN EMBASSY FILES ON TEHRAN CONFERENCE IS CONTAINED IN CITED REFTELS. REQUEST DEPT. PROVIDE EMBASSY REQUESTED BACKGROUND (BY TELEGRAM IF POSSIBLE), PARTICULARLY MATERIAL ON ICRC DRAFT PROTOCOLS ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW. ALSO REQUEST DEPT. CONSIDER PROVIDING EMBASSY GUIDANCE FOR NEXT ROUND OF DISCUSSION WITH MFA. FYI, EMBASSY BELIVES SWEDEN WILL PRESS FORWARD ON THIS ISSUE EVEN IF PALME GOVERNMENT IS UPSET IN SEPT. 16 ELECTION. OLSEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STOCKH03257
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS OLSEN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730936/aaaabaay.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION DPW
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 164766; B. STATE 177463; C.
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27-Sep-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <27-Nov-2001 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 22ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS, TEHRAN, NOV. 7-16, 1973
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, PINS, SW, ICRC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005